

OH BABY

BY JOE SAGE

Ask anyone to draw a picture of a Jeep, and you'll probably get a Wrangler. That's understandable, though the lineup now contains six vehicles: Wrangler, Gladiator, Grand Cherokee, Cherokee, Compass and Renegade. Wrangler is in a league of its own, as is Gladiator (though the latter does inhabit the midsize truck segment). The other four are your basic full-size, midsize, compact and subcompact SUVs (with some room for interpretation). All include versions with top-flight off-road capability, and some offer builds that move well into luxury and/or performance terrain.

It's great to have choices, and all are very popular in our neck of the woods—check the office parking lot or drive a mile, and we're sure to see examples of all six. (Also watch for a three-row Grand Wagoneer or equivalent, once this corona-virus fog lifts and things get back on track.)

One of the neat things about the Jeep lineup—Wrangler is a dead giveaway—is that it's not just a papa-mama-baby bear set of sizes. Rather, each vehicle has its own distinct character, style, form and attributes. The variety is a big plus and/or a conundrum, as it can lead to apples' n' oranges buying decisions. One arguable exception is the Jeep Compass (which replaced both Liberty and a com-

pletely different Compass a few years ago). Based on everything from styling to its range of models and finishes, it has been loosely known to many as a Baby Grand Cherokee. And those are some big adult-sized shoes to fill.

Compass and Renegade are priced about the same (starting at about \$22,000). Their interior size specs are very similar and in some cases overlap—the smaller Renegade, for example, having more headroom. And that may shed light on the Compass's personality—a bit lower, sleeker and more carlike, while the Renegade is taller, boxier and more utility-like. Both have a 180-hp 2.4L Tiger-Shark four-cylinder engine, though Renegade also offers a 160-hp 1.4L turbo (with higher torque than the 2.4L). Both have the Fiat-based 9-speed automatic, while Renegade offers a manual only with the 1.4L engine, and Compass offers a manual (or 6-spd auto, not 9-spd) with two-wheel drive only.

Compass's Jeep Active Drive system is four-wheel/two-wheel automatic, with 4WD lock plus drive modes for sand and mud.

There are similarly useful comparisons with the Cherokee, but its combination of bigger engines (the main thing we'd like available on Compass) and \$4k-higher pricing (advantage: Compass) is the main one. That leads to Grand Cherokee, another \$8k higher still, or \$12k (more than 50 percent) higher than Compass. Which brings us right back to the Baby Grand thing. Once you've taken a mental spin through the whole lineup, the Compass's appeal is clear. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	2.4L TigerShark in-line 4 w MultiAir2 alum/alum 16v SOHC w engine stop-start (ESS)
HP / TORQUE	180 hp / 175 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	4x4 (4x2 available)
TRANSMISSION	(4x4) 9-spd automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Jeep Active Drive: fully disconnect 4x2 mode w auto 4x4 engage; full-time 4x4 mode w active on-demand clutch (alt: Trailhawk: Jeep Active Drive Low w 20:1 crawl)
ELECTRICAL	160A, dual batteries w ESS
SUSPENSION .F:	MacPherson strut, coils, flat front steel crossmember, hi-strgth steel dbl shell lower control, stblzr bar; R: Chapman strut, hi-strgth steel links, isolated steel rear cradle (4x4), coils, stblzr bar
STEERING	electric rack & pinion
BRAKES ..F:	12x1.1 vented w 2.36 single piston float cal; R: 10.95 solid w 1.5 single-piston floating caliper
WHEELS	18x7.0 polished alum / grey pockets
TIRES	225/55R18 BSW all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	173 / 103.8 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.4 ft (Trailhawk 35.3)
GROUND CLEARANCE	(4x4) 8.2 in
APPROACH / BRKOVER / DEPART	16.8 / 22.9 / 31.7
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w sunroof) 38.6 / 38.5 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.8 / 38.3 in
CARGO CAPACITY	27.2 / 59.8 cu.ft
WEIGHT / TOW CAPACITY	3327 lb / (4x4) 2000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	regular unl / 13.5 gal
MPG	22/30/25 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$29,905
REDLINE PEARL-COAT PAINT	195
PREMIUM LIGHTING GRP: LED, bi-xenon	695
LUXURY SEAT GRP: leather, vented, pwr, memory	595
UCONNECT® 4C NAV W 8.4": w wifi hot spot	1245
FULL SUNROOF: power front, fixed rear	1595
AUDIO: premium Alpine® speaker system.....	795
REAR CONVENIENCE GRP: power liftgate, revrsbl mat ..	725
SAFETY/SECURITY GRP: rear park assist, blind spot & cross-path detect, rain-sense wipers.....	745
ADVANCED SAFETY GRP: auto high beam, adaptive cruise w stop & go, lane depart warn plus, full speed fwd collision warn plus, advanced brake assist	795
COMPACT SPARE	345
DESTINATION CHARGE	1495
TOTAL	\$39,130

